

**Senior Advisory Committee
October 16, 2012
Town Hall, Old Town Road
10:15 a.m.**

Present: Chair Gail Pierce, Sandra Kelly, Dorothy Graham, Betsy Theve, Linda Spak, Betsey DeMaggio, Sandra Hopf and Ann Henault. Also present were Senior Coordinator Kathleen Mitchell and for the recording of minutes, Millie McGinnes.

Meeting was called to order by the Chair, Gail Pierce at 10:15 p.m.

Approve Minutes of meeting, September 18, 2012.

Betsy Theve moved to approve the minutes of September 18, 2012 as amended. The motion was seconded by Ann Henault and carried.

Ayes 8 (Pierce, Kelly, Graham, Theve, Spak, DeMaggio, Henault, Hopf) Nays 0

Conversation with State Nurse Mary Donnelly

As Nurse Donnelly was not yet present at the meeting, the Committee skipped to the next agenda item.

Receive and discuss Senior Coordinator Kathleen Mitchell's report

- a) Activities
- b) Fundraising
- c) Thank you notes to presenters
- d) Sponsors for certain activities
- e) Group name

Kathleen Mitchell distributed a written report which was reviewed and discussed. The following items were highlighted or considered:

- Off island shopping trips have been scheduled for 10/18 and 10/29. The 10/18 trip will be cancelled, as there is no one signed up at this time. A minimum of five participants was set for all future trips. It was suggested to set two trips monthly: one shopping and one event.
- An overnight trip may be planned in the future. If such a trip is planned, it was decided to make it non-refundable, paid in advance.
- It would be convenient to have one universal community calendar in order to track and not conflict with other community events. It was suggested that the Chamber of Commerce's calendar be consulted when scheduling events.

Chair Gail Pierce commended Ms. Mitchell on the informative Senior Advisory section in the Block Island Times. She also thanked the Block Island Times for providing room for the section.

Nurse Mary Donnelly joined the meeting and the Coordinator's report was interrupted to address other agenda items.

Conversation with State Nurse Mary Donnelly

- a) Need for list of "off island" facilities for Senior's long term and short term care

Ms. Pierce explained that the committee was thinking of compiling a directory of organizations and facilities that offer services such as grief counseling, physical therapy, social work, in-home care, etc. She questioned Ms. Donnelly about the need of such a directory and if one currently exists. Ms. Donnelly noted that South County Community Action provides a number of services noted. Other aid organizations mentioned were:

- WAVE which provides transportation to medical appointments.
- Visiting Nurses Association which provides in-home nursing support and physical therapy (with a doctor's prescription).
- Visiting Angels which offer in-home services for a fee.
- Heating assistance program through South County Community Action.

b) Propose a register of islanders able to help seniors

Ms. Pierce stated that she thought it would be helpful to have a list of people on the island that would be available as an in-home helper/caregiver employee. Ms. Donnelly noted that those in need currently have the help they need.

c) Numerous concerns form general public re: staying on Block Island as they age

Donn Frageau of Mabel's Restaurant and Lonni Todd were present. Mr. Frageau suggested creating a meals delivery program for those in need and shut-ins. He suggested that, for a fee, Mabel's could prepare meals and volunteers could deliver and check in on the recipient. It was suggested that delivery volunteers receive home helper training. Lonni Todd offered to help with setting up and volunteering for such a program.

Discussion ensued regarding whether such a program would be based upon need or opened up to everyone and if there were any funding or subsidies for such. It was decided to have a group including Donn Frageau, Lonni Todd, Gail Pierce and Betsey DeMaggio get together to work out the structure and guidelines.

Gail Pierce thanked Ms. Donnelly, Ms. Todd and Mr. Frageau for attending the meeting and their ideas and input.

The Committee then skipped to agenda item "Update on ongoing activities (c) Block Island Bulletin Board," as some members had to leave soon to set up for Lunch Bunch.

Update on ongoing activities

a) Soup Group

No report was given.

b) Fish

Ms. Pierce noted that she was hoping for more participants to use the FISH services.

c) Block Island Bulletin Board

Ms. Kelly reported that there were 198 members of the Bulletin Board, with 694 messages posted to date. She explained that they were having problems with Google Groups, which was going to a new format, and was not recognizing Ms. Kelly and Ms. Merritt as managers.

Without being recognized, they are unable to review and moderate messages. It was decided that while the Google Groups change was in progress, all messages will go out unmoderated for the time being.

Senior Tax Exemptions –Town Council’s response

Sandra Kelly reported that the Town Council approved the request to increase the household income maximum to \$40,000 for seniors to be eligible for a tax exemption.

Ms. Kelly, Ms. DeMaggio and Ms. Henault left the meeting at 11:15 a.m. to attend to Lunch Bunch duties. The Committee returned to the Coordinators report.

Receive and discuss Senior Coordinator Kathleen Mitchell’s report - continued

- a) Activities
- b) Fundraising
- c) Thank you notes to presenters
- d) Sponsors for certain activities
- e) Group name

Ms. Pierce stated that each of the events organized by Ms. Mitchell should have a volunteer/committee member host. Participants should contact and sign up with the host, and the host should be responsible for sending thank you letters as needed.

Discussion ensued regarding collecting fees and donations at events. Ms. Spak suggested having a basket at events asking for donations for future Senior Advisory Committee programming/events. It was noted that all donations must be deposited into the Town account and they will be allocated to the committee’s funding line.

Ms. Pierce complimented Ms. Mitchell on her the great job she has done so far, noting letters, articles and programming. The committee members concurred.

Apportion money for Senior Coordinator “petty cash”

Ms. Pierce explained that Ms. Mitchell needs a small fund of cash to assist with programming.

Ms. Graham made a motion to authorize \$150.00 to establish a petty cash fund for Senior Coordinator Kathleen Mitchell. The motion was seconded by Ms. Theve and carried.

Ayes 5 (Pierce, Graham, Theve, Spak, Hopf) Nays 0

Absent 3 (Kelly, DeMaggio, Henault)

Island wide notification systems...

Earlier in the meeting Ms. Kelly handed out information regarding a web-based system for notification. Ms. Mitchell noted that she sent out an email with information regarding the system used at her son’s school.

It was noted that the terms of Linda Spak, Sandra Hopf and Betsy Theve would be up this December. Ms. Hopf and Ms. Spak expressed interest in being reappointed, whereas Ms. Theve stated that she was ready to retire from the committee.

Next Meeting – November 20, 2012 at 10:15 a.m.

After discussion, the committee changed the next meeting date to November 13, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.

At 11:45 a.m. a motion was made by Ms. Theve and seconded by Ms. Graham to adjourn and voted unanimously.

Millie McGinnes
Deputy Town Clerk

Minutes approved: October 13, 2012